

BUYING HELP

Can I store all my photos on one memory card?

Q After using a digital camera for several years, I've decided to splash out on a new digital SLR. Having used Canon and Nikon film cameras in the past, I'm interested in Canon's EOS 350D and Nikon's D50 and D70s. I want a camera that can store hundreds of photos taken during a long trip, without having to swap memory cards. I intend to store pictures as RAW files and edit them using Photoshop. What do you recommend?

Jack Gladney

A All three of the cameras you are considering performed well in our digital SLR round-up in *Shopper* June 2006, and all three can record images in RAW format for processing and editing on a computer. We found the EOS 350D gave the best image quality, with impressive detail and little noise. The D50 is impressive at high ISO settings, so it's a good choice for low-light or action photography, but otherwise the D70s produces more natural images.

The D50 is the odd one out for storage, as it uses SD memory cards. These are inexpensive and can be bought almost anywhere, but cards with a capacity of more than 2GB are rare and expensive. If you need to store large numbers of files regularly, we recommend choosing a camera with a CompactFlash slot instead. Both the EOS 350D and Nikon D70s have one of these.

Such slots allow you to use CompactFlash memory cards, which have capacities of up to 4GB, or

MicroDrive cards that can hold up to 6GB. Assuming that your RAW files are around 10MB each, one MicroDrive could hold 600 shots, which ought to be enough for even a long trip.

All this storage space won't be much use if your batteries run out halfway through the trip, however. Fortunately, the EOS 350D lasted for 651 shots in our battery test, so it should keep you shooting over several days. As the D70s is far more expensive without producing notably better images, the EOS 350D would be our choice. **TR**



▲ Canon's EOS 350D has a CompactFlash slot, so it can store hundreds of large photo files

Can I get an English notebook in Sweden?

Q My son is living in Sweden with his Swedish girlfriend. He doesn't speak much Swedish, but her English is very good. They want to buy a notebook, but will a Swedish notebook and its keyboard work with English software? Is there any way of setting the notebook so it's in English for my son and in Swedish for his girlfriend?

Brian Cooper

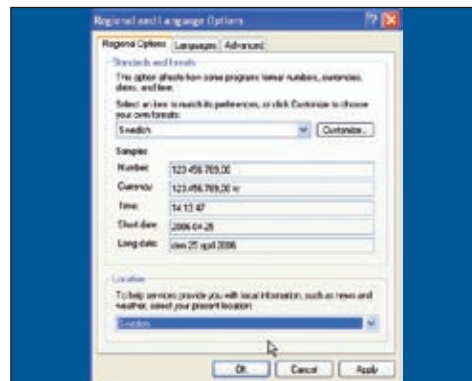
A Swedish keyboards use a QWERTY layout, like UK keyboards, but have special accent keys where you'd normally find the colon and @ keys on a UK keyboard, so there's not a problem on this front. However, you can't change the language of the operating system menus and so on. Microsoft provides multilingual support on business PCs only and in these cases the original installation has to be in English.

You'd be better off buying a notebook in the UK and having it shipped to Sweden. Make sure it has a European warranty; otherwise, your son will have problems if the notebook develops a fault. If you don't want to do this, there are a couple of things you can try.

First, while you can't change the language of the operating system, you can use the Windows Control Panel to change the Regional settings. These include a facility to change the 'location' to Sweden, and the standard and formats (time, date and monetary units) to those of Sweden, while leaving the operating system running in English.

If you're using Microsoft Office, set the dictionary to the language of the person using the notebook. Windows XP has multi-user support, where each user has their own sets of preferences. Your son can have his user account set up with English dictionaries and settings; his girlfriend can choose the Swedish options. Click on Users in the Control Panel to set this up.

Another option is to install the English version of Windows on a Swedish notebook. If you prefer, you can even set it up as a dual-boot system with both English and Swedish versions. **DL**



▲ You can't change Windows' language, but you can work with other countries' currencies and date formats

YOUR EXPERTS

For advice on PC purchases, contact **Buying Help**

Tom Royal

Labs Editor Tom Royal can recommend the best product for your specific requirements.



David Ludlow

If the product you need exists, Reviews Editor David Ludlow knows where you can buy it.



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Internet access on a notebook

Q I want to connect my notebook to the internet through my mobile phone. My current contract is quite expensive, so I'm going to change it. What should I look for in a new contract and mobile phone?

Stephen Mosely

A You should choose a contract that provides GPRS or 3G data access. GPRS is slower but has more coverage. Look for a plan that lets you add data packages; for example, Orange charges £8 extra per month for 10MB of downloads. Once this limit has been reached, you're charged at the standard rate per megabyte. This can get expensive, so keep your usage to a minimum if you can, by only checking emails and using internet sites with few graphics.

Look for a handset with Bluetooth, as this is the easiest way to connect your PC to your phone. You may have to buy a Bluetooth dongle for your PC, such as My Memory's USB Bluetooth Adaptor, which costs just £9 including VAT from www.mymemory.co.uk. Getting your notebook connected can be tricky, but there's plenty of help on the internet if you get stuck.

You can keep your existing phone number if you wish, even if you move service provider. When you disconnect your current phone, ask for your Porting Authorisation Code (PAC). There may be a small charge for this code. When you get your new contract, phone your provider and give them the PAC. It will take between five and seven days to complete the transfer.

You don't have to connect via a phone if you buy a data card such as Vodafone's 3G Data Card. There are two options: 250MB of data per month for £30 per month or unlimited data for £52.88 a month. The advantage of data cards is they simply plug into a notebook's PC card slot and make it easy to connect to the internet. **DL**



▲ A data card makes it simple to get online

Power up

Q My notebook's power supply has broken. The manufacturer has told me it will cost almost £100 to get it replaced. I've searched online for a replacement but I can't find anything. What can I do?

James Moran

A Notebook manufacturers charge a lot of money for replacement notebook power supplies and this is unlikely to change. But there's nothing that says you have to buy a branded power supply. We recommend you buy a universal power supply. Kensington's Universal 70w AC Adapter costs £56 including VAT from www.misco.co.uk.

This supply comes with all the adaptors needed to connect to many different notebooks, although you should check the full specification at www.kensington.com to ensure that there's a compatible adaptor for your notebook. As well as being cheaper than buying an official replacement, a universal power adaptor can still be used if you change notebooks.

If you regularly use your notebook in two places, such as at home and at work, universal power adaptors are a good way of providing mains power in both places without having to carry an adaptor around with you. **DL**

How can I burn my home movies to DVD?

Q I have bought a digital video camera, and I am teaching myself how to edit video footage on my computer using Adobe Premier Elements. Having finished editing a wedding video for my friend, I want to create a DVD copy I can send to the bride's parents. Sadly, my current computer can write to CD-R and CD-RW discs only. What would be the cheapest and easiest way to upgrade to a DVD writer?

Louis Holland

A Adding an internal DVD writer is simple and inexpensive, and will allow you to burn video DVDs that can be

played in most DVD players. In our DVD writers test in *Shopper* May 2006, the best internal DVD writer was the Asus DRW-1608PS. This writer now costs just £29 including VAT from www.techfever.co.uk, so it's better value than ever. It's also fast, and it comes with some useful software.

To install the DRW-1608PS, you'll need to open your computer's case, fit the drive in place and connect the necessary cables. If you are not confident about doing this, you could add an external DVD writer that connects to a USB2 port instead. We recommend Samsung's SE-W164L, which costs around £55 including VAT. It's more expensive than the DRW-1608PS,

but it's quick and easy to install. You simply plug in the USB cable and power adaptor. **TR**



▲ Asus's DRW-1608PS won a Best Buy award for being inexpensive and fast

How do I set up a webcam in my window?

Q I have set up a website for my local village council. One of the councillors asked if it would be possible to set up a webcam so visitors to our website could see a live view of the high street. The council offices would be an ideal vantage point for such a camera; I could place it in the top-floor window. The problem is I don't know what kind of camera to buy. Do I need a digital camera, a digital video camera or a webcam? Our budget is £200.

Anna Wulf

A There are several ways to set up a webcam, but the simplest way is to use an IP camera. Unlike a standard

webcam, which connects to a computer's USB port, an IP camera connects directly to a computer network. If you also have a broadband internet connection, this makes it easy to connect the camera itself to the internet.

If you have a wireless broadband connection, we recommend buying the Vivotek XIP101 camera reviewed in *Labs*, *Shopper* April 2006. This camera costs £176 including VAT from www.y3kcctv.co.uk, and can connect to a broadband internet connection wirelessly. Alternatively, if you can stretch a network cable between



your broadband router and the camera location, there is a cheaper wired-only version. This is the XIP100 and it costs £118 including VAT. Once you've placed the camera in position and connected it to your network, you can set it to upload images to your website's FTP server automatically.

If your router supports a Dynamic DNS service, you can create a unique web address for your camera, such as <http://myvillagecamera.dyndns.org>, and have it broadcast pictures direct to the internet. **TR**

◀ The Vivotek XIP101 IP camera can be used to set up a live internet video feed